GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HOME AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4274
ANSWERED ON:17.12.2002
INFILTRATION/TERRORISTS ACTIVITIES IN J & K
PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI;RENUKA CHOWDHURY;SUSHIL KUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there was an upsurge in infiltration and other Pak backed terrorist activities in Jammu and Kashmir in August-September 2002 on the eve of the recent elections to Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly;

(b) is so, the details of the cases of infiltration and terrorist activities that come to notice during the period;

(c) the details of the precautionary measure taken to prevent disruption during the election process;

(d) whether the foreign observers permitted during J&K elections accepted that Pak backed terrorism has increased during the period; and

(e) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI CH. VIDYASAGAR RAO)

(a) & (b): Yes, Sir. There had been an increase in the infiltration and other terrorist related activities in Jammu and Kashmir during August-September 2002. As per the information provided by the Government of Jammu & Kashmir, during the period of electioneering in the State (i.e. from August 01 to Oct. 08, 2002) 1010 incidents of terrorist violence took place against the monthly average of about 310 incidences during the calendar year 2002 (till 30 November). While it is difficult to assess the exact figures of infiltration, available estimations by agencies concerned about infiltration indicate an upswing during this period. Pak-ISI backed terrorist outfits in their attempts at executing their mentor`s game plan of disrupting the J&K State Assembly Election had shown a callous disregard for peoples` yearning for peace and normalcy through terrorist acts and threats to deter people from exercising their democratic rights freely and fearlessly.

(c): Government on its part remained determined to provide appropriate support to the Election Commission to help it to ensure a free, fair, peaceful and credible election to the State Assembly. Accordingly, the State Government was advised to make elaborate security arrangements, to ensure smooth and violence free conduct of elections, and to take steps to inter-alia to provide security cover to leaders and workers of various political parties commensurate with the threat perception in each case, to address the security concerns of the common people to enable them to gather and interact freely, to undertake sustained and focused demonstrative anti terrorism operations against the terrorist and other hardcore pro-Pak fundamentalists & to blunt their capabilities of disrupting the election process. The polling booths were adequately covered with prior deployment of security forces and sufficient security cover was provided to election rallies/meetings.

Besides above measures, despite constraints and demands for CPMFs from elsewhere in the country, large numbers of additional CPMFs were also made available to assist in the smooth, peaceful and fair conduct of held Assembly elections.

(d) & (e): About thirty Delhi-based diplomats, as a part of their normal diplomatic functioning, visited Jammu and Kashmir during the assembly elections in the State. Any reports/impressions given by the diplomats would have been to their respective government, which is again a part of the normal diplomatic functioning.

Members of the international community, including United States, European Union, Japan and Russia condemned the terrorist violence during the elections in the State.

The Government has consistently taken up through diplomatic initiatives as well as voiced concern at various international fora about threats to democratic and civil society emerging from Pak State sponsored cross-border terrorism in J&K.